

# Town of



# Huntington

... News Release From

The Town of Huntington ...

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## Public Asked to Help Stop LIPA Tax Hike

*Petrone, Cuthbertson announce campaign to get residents to sign on-line petition, send email to state legislators to stop Northport Power Plant assessment challenge that could hike school taxes by 60 percent and Town taxes by 15 percent.*

Northport, NY – Huntington Supervisor Frank P. Petrone, Councilman Mark Cuthbertson, and the Huntington Town Council today called for Town residents to join them in insisting that language ending the assessment challenge on the Northport Power plant be part of the pending legislation restructuring the Long Island Power Authority.

"With less than two weeks left in the current legislative session, it is important that Town residents act now tell their representatives in Albany that they must stop, once and for all, the prospect of the devastating tax increases LIPA seeks," Supervisor Petrone said at a news conference held in the shadow of the Northport plant.

"Public support is essential to send the message to Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature that the bill to restructure LIPA needs to include language that prevents the authority from continuing its effort to impose an undue burden on the citizens who have hosted this power plant for half a century," Councilman Cuthbertson said.

Specifically, Supervisor Petrone and Councilman Cuthbertson asked residents to:

- Call the Governor's Hotline at 855-693-8690. Tell Governor Cuomo that the Town of Huntington has kept its commitment to freeze the assessment on the Northport Power Station and now LIPA must also live up to its pledge not to file assessment challenges if there is no change in assessment. Tell him this issue must be resolved in any legislation to restructure LIPA.
- Sign the online petition on the Town's website. Go out to the website – [huntingtonny.gov](http://www.huntingtonny.gov) -- and look for the Stop LIPA Tax Hike button on the rotating ribbon at the bottom of the page. Click on that and look for the widget on the right side of the Stop LIPA Tax Hike page. Or they can go directly to <http://www.huntingtonny.gov/content/13753/23144/default.aspx>
- Email the Governor and the State Legislative Delegation. The Stop LIPA TAX Hike page on the Town's website includes the text of a suggested letter that residents

can paste into their email as well as the email addresses for the Governor and our local legislators.

LIPA filed the assessment challenge in 2010, seeking to have the plant's assessment reduced by 90 percent. LIPA is seeking over \$270 million in tax refunds from the Town, and if successful the Town property tax would increase by over 15 percent and school district taxes would increase by almost 60 percent. Library and county property taxes would also increase.

The Town and the Northport-East Northport School District are fighting the assessment challenge and recently won a key court decision allowing their suit to continue. The Town and School district contend the assessment challenge is improper because when it was formed, LIPA promised it would not challenge the Northport Power Plant's assessment if the Town did not raise it. The judge who just ruled in the court case said it is "undisputed" that the assessment has not been raised.

The court case could continue for a number of years, especially if LIPA appeals preliminary rulings such as the one recently issued allowing the case to go ahead. However, the Town has asked Governor Andrew Cuomo and the State Legislature to include language ending the assessment challenge in the legislation restructuring LIPA. This would be similar to the language pertaining to taxes for the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant that was included in the legislation creating LIPA .

Last week, the Town Board voted unanimously to send a message to Gov. Cuomo and the Town's State Legislative delegation asking that this language be included in the legislation. With less than 10 days left in the legislative session, Town officials believe public involvement is crucial in letting the state know that this issue is vital to Huntington residents.

Supervisor Petrone and Councilman Cuthbertson have also noted that there is a long-term solution to the question on which the Town is willing to work with LIPA: the repowering of the Northport plant, to increase its productivity and eliminate its assessed value as an issue.

"The Town would be willing to hold the assessment on the plant, even as the improvements made it more valuable," Supervisor Petrone said. "That is a solution that would benefit Huntington taxpayers and all Long Islanders."

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